

SCOTLAND's
Sin, Danger, and Duty. ¹⁴⁸⁵ 31

Faithfully Represented

In a SERMON Preach'd at the *West-Kirk*,
August 23d, 1696.

Being a Solemn FAST-DAY,

Upon Occasion of

The great *Dearth* and *Famine*.

B Y

Mr. DAVID WILLIAMSON, late Minister of
the Gospel at *West-Kirk*.

Then, taken from his Mouth in *Short-Hand*; and ~~Now~~, at the Desire,
and by the Advice of several Ministers and private Christians,

Publish'd, *As a Word in Season*,

B Y

Mr. JOHN WILLIAMSON, Minister of the Gospel
at *Inveresk* and *Musselburgh*.

HEB. xi. 4.— *He being Dead, yet speaketh.*

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P R E F A C E

T O T H E

R E A D E R.

CHRISTIAN READER,

TH^O I have suggested the Occasion of publishing this Sermon in the Title Page ; yet I judge my self obliged to account for it a little more fully. I'm perswaded, my worthy Father never design'd it for the Press : And, tho' I have had it lying by me, ever since it was preached, and have frequently perused it ; yet, it never entred into my Mind to publish it, till last Week, upon the Occasion following.

The Synod of Lorthian and Tweeddale having under their Consideration to appoint a *FAST* within their Bounds, upon the Account of the abounding Sins of the Land, and the shreatned Danger of the Pestilence now raging in France, with whom this Island hath frequent Commerce : While they were deliberating anent a Draught of the Causes of this Fast, I had Occasion, to discourse with some Ministers, in a Private Meeting, concerning what might be proper Causes of Fasting at this Time ; and in the Course of our Communing concerning the Sins of these Lands, and the Judgments we had been under, the present Calamities of the Nation, and what we had Cause to fear : This Sermon of my Father's came into my Mind ; and I spoke of it to them, no otherwise, but as a Thing that fell in my Way, according to the Subject of our Conversation. And having, but some few Days before, been looking it over, (tho' not with the least Thought, then, of publishing it) I was in Case to give them a tolerable Account of it. They did thereupon enquire at me concerning the Copy of it ; I told them, I had no Copy of this Sermon among any Manuscripts

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of my Father's, that had come to my Hand; but that I had taken it from his Mouth in Short-hand, and a little thereafter, had drawn it out into Long-hand. They advised and entreated me, to Revise, and Print it, judging it most SEASONABLE at this Juncture. I so far hearkned unto their Advice, as to Consult with others, both Ministers and private Christians, who all concurred heartily in the same Council. And now, that I have adventured to publish this Posthumous Work, I must beg of the Reader, That any Defects that may be observed therein, may not be ascribed to the Author, but to the Imperfection of the Copy, which I am sensible wants some Words, and Parts of Sentences, which could not be overtaken in Writing, even in Short-hand; especially considering, how quick my Father's Delivery was sometimes. Where such Defects render the Sense of a Sentence, or Paragraph unintelligible, I have been obliged to make some Supply; but still keeping close to what, I conceived, from what was written, might be the Sense and Scope of the Preacher.

I shall only add, That the Warnings which my worthy Father had in this Sermon, were frequently given upon other Occasions; and I very well remember, that for many Years before his Death, he had very deep Impressions of heavy Judgments coming upon these Lands, and frequently expressed them in his Sermons, especially on Fast-Days: And when asked upon his Death-bed, what his Thoughts were of the designed Union with England, the Terms whereof were not then known, (for he died August 6. 1706, before the Union Parliament met) his Words were these, I am afraid of a foul Mixture. And whether it hath not been so, I may leave to my discerning Persons to judge. I conceive we had never more Ground to apprehend the Accomplishment of these Warnings, than at this Day, when we consider our present Case, both as to abounding Impieties among all Ranks, and the Judgments that are in part inflicted, and further threatened. And on this Account, I am hopeful, the publishing of this Sermon, even under the Disadvantages of a Posthumous Piece, will be accounted Seasonable, by all the true Lovers of our Zion, into whose Hands it shall come. And that the Lord may bless it for our Upstirring, Edification and Reformation, is, and shall be the sincere Prayer of,

MUSSELBURGH,
November 11th,
1720.



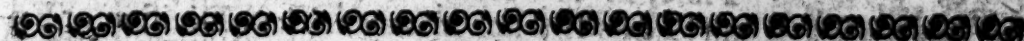
JO. WILLIAMSON.

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SCOTLAND'S *Sin, Danger, and Duty.*



A
Fast-Day Sermon at Westkirk,

August 23d 1696, on these TEXTS.

PROV. xiii. 6.

But Wickedness overthroweth the Sinner.

JOSHUA vii. 13.

*Up, sanctify the People, and say, Sanctify your selves against to Morrow;
for thus saith the Lord God of Israel, There is an accursed Thing in
the Midst of thee, O Israel: Thou canst not stand before thine En-
emies, until ye take away the accursed Thing from among you.*

EZEKIEL xxxiii. 1 — 6.

Again, the Word of the Lord came unto me, saying,

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2. Son of Man, speak to the Children of thy People, and say unto them, *When I bring the Sword upon a Land, if the People of the Land take a Man of their Coasts, and set him for their Watchman:*
3. *If, when he seeth the Sword come upon the Land, he blow the Trumpet, and warn the People;*
4. *Then, whosoever heareth the Sound of the Trumpet, and taketh not Warning; if the Sword come and take him away, his Blood shall be upon his own Head.*
5. *He heard the Sound of the Trumpet, and took not Warning; his Blood shall be upon him: But he that taketh Warning, shall deliver his Soul.*
6. *But if the Watchman see the Sword come, and blow not the Trumpet, and the People be not warned; if the Sword come, and take any Person from among them, he is taken away in his Iniquity; but his Blood will I require at the Watchman's Hand.*



Y BELOVED, I do not intend to take up your Time, in any Analysis of the Chapters, where our Texts ly; nor in any critical Division or Explication of the Words themselves: The Meaning of them being obvious at first View. I offer to you THREE PLAIN DOCTRINES from them.

DOCT. I. From PROV. xiii. 6.

That Sin brings on Judgments. Wickedness overthroweth the Sinner.

DOCT. II. From JOSHUA vii. 13.

That Sin, which provoketh GOD to threaten and inflict Judgments, should be sought out, that it may be mourned for, and so removed.

The LORD's People got a Back-set at Ai; the good Man Joshua was like to break his Heart, and with Extremity of Grief and Concern, rent his Clothes, and fell to the Earth upon his Face; and with deep Lamentation, pleads and expostulates with God upon that Occasion. But what says the LORD? No, Joshua, that will not do the Turn; *Get thee up, wherefore liest thou thus upon thy Face? Israel hath sinned and transgressed my Covenant, which I commanded them*

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them. Up, Joshua, sanctify the People; there's an accursed Thing among you: Up, and search it out, and let it be taken away.

D O C T. III. From EZEKIEL xxxiii. 1. &c.

That when Judgments are threatned, feared, and impending; Ministers should warn People, and People should take Warning; and both at their Peril. I return unto

DOCT. I. *That Sin bringeth on Judgments.* A plain Truth, which I need not insist to prove. But, that it may make the deeper Impression upon you, consider a few Scripture Instances. Many of the *Angels in Heaven*, were, for their Sin, cast down into Hell; 2 Pet. ii. 4. The *Serpent*, for what he did, was cursed of God; Gen. iii. 14. And so were our first Parents *Adam and Eve*, for their Sin; Ver. 16,——19. The *Old World*, for their Sin, were swallowed up by a Deluge; Gen. vi. 5, 6, 7. *Sodom and Gomorrah*, for their Sin, were suddenly destroyed, by the Vengeance of God raining down Fire and Brimstone upon them; whereby *their Cities were turned into Ashes*, and they were condemned with an Overthrow, and made an *Ensamble unto those that after should live Ungodly*, Gen. xviii. 20. xix. 24, 25. 2 Pet. ii. 6. *Egypt*, for their Sin, had grievous Judgments, one upon the Back of another, inflicted upon them, till they were quite overthrown in the *Red-Sea*; Exod. vi, vii, &c. The *People of GOD*, in the *Wilderness*, for their Sin, had many a sad Stroke from God inflicted upon them; Judg. ii. 20. Heb. iii. 8, &c. And afterwards, when they were settled in the *Promised Land*, they were frequently visited with various Rods, upon Account of their Sins; and at length were sent into Captivity in a strange Land for their Sins: And now, upon account of their Sins, are indeed become *Lo-Ammi* and *Lo-Ruhamah*; they are now, *Not his People*, but rejected, for their grievous Sins; and particularly, their crucifying the *LORD of Glory*. The *Seven Churches of Asia*, for their Sin, have long ago had the *Candlestick removed from them*, and their Places are now possessed by the Followers of the *Vile Imposture Mahomet*. I might multiply Instances to this Purpose, to show that Sin brings on Judgment, both on Persons, Families, and Nations; but I need not insist on so plain a Point: I shall only add, *That the Godly*
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themselves, tho' they get their Soul for a Prey, and are not under Condemnation, yet do not escape without a Rod, upon account of their Sins. Look unto *Psal. lxxxix. 30, &c.* *If his Children forsake my Law, and walk not in my Judgments; if they break my Statutes, and keep not my Commandments; then will I visit their Transgression with the Rod, and their Iniquity with Stripes, &c.* — And if Judgment begin at the House of *G O D*, what shall the End be of them that obey not the Gospel of *G O D*? If the Righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the Ungodly and the Sinner appear? Hear what Paul says shall come of them, *2 Thes. i. 7, 8, 9.* — The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven, with his mighty Angels, in flaming Fire, taking Vengeance on them that know not *G O D*, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall be punished with everlasting Destruction, from the Presence of the *LORD*, and from the Glory of his Power. — So much for the Confirmation of this Point, *That Sin brings on Judgments.*

But, you will, perhaps say to me, does this always hold, That Judgments are inflicted for Sin? Were there not very heavy and grievous Afflictions sent upon *Job*? And yet it is generally thought, it was for the Trial of his Grace, and not for his Sin.

I answer, *First*, *Job* was not free of Sin; for there is no Man that sinneth not, *1 Kings viii. 46.* There is not a just Man upon Earth that doth Good, and sinneth not, *Eccles. vii. 20.* And *Job* himself is very sensible of his Sin, and with deep Humiliation expresseth his Abhorrence of himself, on that Account. *Job xlii. 5.*

Therefore, *2dly*, Seeing the best have Ground to charge themselves with innumerable Evils, that daily encompass them about, it is the safest Way for them, to suspect Sin to be at the Bottom, when they are under the Rod; and to make diligent Enquiry into the Cause why the *LORD* contends with them. Nevertheless,

3dly, 'Tis certain, some Judgments, sometimes are, for the evidencing and proving of the Graces of the *LORD*'s People, for the Trial of their Faith, *1 Pet. i. 7.* and *Chap. iv. 12.* And such were the Judgments inflicted upon *Job*.

But for ordinary, Judgments are sent, for the Punishment of Sinners, and the fatherly Chastisement of Saints; and so our Observation holds true, *That Sin brings on Judgments.*

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But, you will say, Why is it so? why do Judgments follow upon Sin? I answer, in a Word, Because of God's Purity, and Holiness; there being a direct Contrariety betwixt his holy Nature and Sin; because of his perpetual Justice and Righteousness; because of his Truth and Veracity; who will execute threatned Judgments, when Men continue in their Sin without Repentance; because of his Care, sometimes by inflicting Judgments, to keep others from the Infection of these Sins, that hath brought them upon them; because of his Wisdom, to stop the Mouth of Sinners, when punished: In a Word, it is, That Sinners may take Warning by lesser Judgments, to repent, and so escape utter Ruin; and that obstinately impenitent Sinners may be rendred inexcusable; and that God *may be justify'd when he speaketh, and be clear when he judgeth*, Psal. li. 4. And that, altho' the final Distribution of Rewards and Punishments be reserved unto the *Last Day*, that great and notable Day of the LORD; yet, in the mean Time, it may appear, to the Comfort of Saints, and the Terror and Conviction of Sinners: *That verily there is a God that judgeth in the Earth*, Psal. lviii. 11. I say no more on this *first Point*, but these *two Words*.

First, When ever you hear Judgments threatned, or when you have Cause to fear they are approaching, or when they are impending; fear God, blame your selves; and justify him; take with Guilt, and turn to the Hand that smiteth; Beware of covering your Sin, beware of defending it, guard against slight Thoughts of God's Judgments, for *he is a consuming Fire*: There are many Arrows in his Quiver, and if we continue impenitent, under lesser Judgments, and more gentle Warnings, he can heat the Furnace yet seven Times, more. Dearly Beloved, there's no contending with God, no standing out against him, when he is angry, whether it be with a Person, or a People. Therefore,

2dly, Seeing Sin brings on Judgments; would you escape Judgments, beware of Sin, be afflicted and mourn for past Sins, strive against the present Influence of Corruption, and of Temptations to Sin, guard against Sin in Time coming; and that you may the better do so; look up to him, who is exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give Repentance, and Remission of Sins unto Israel, Acts v. 31. So much for this *first Doctrine*, I go on unto

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DOCT. II. FROM JOSHUA vii. 13.

That Sin which provoketh God, to threaten and inflict Judgments, should be sought out, that it may be mourned for, and so removed.

Here I would speak to three Things.

I. *That whenever there are any Appearances of Judgments, or when they fall upon us; Sin should be searched out.*

II. *How Sin may be searched and found out, when Judgments are threatened or inflicted.*

III. *That the accursed Thing Sin being searched and found, should be taken away, and how this may be done.*

A Word to each of these.

I. *That whenever there are any Appearances of Judgments, or when they fall upon us; Sin should be searched out.*

My Friends, consider here, 1. *That as it is God's Design in his Judgments, to punish or correct for Sin; so we find there is Nothing in the World, will so readily bring Folk's Sin into their Remembrance, as Judgments: I'll give you an Instance in the Patriarchs, Joseph's Brethren, Genl xlii. 21. They said one to another, We are verily guilty concerning our Brother, in that we saw the Anguish of his Soul, when he besought us; and we would not hear; therefore is this Distress come upon us. When they were fore put to it, the Sin which they had committed a good Time ago, comes fresh into their Minds. What! say they, We are guilty concerning our Brother: Here's the Stroke of the Hand of God upon us, this brings us to mind how unkindly and inhumanly we treated our innocent Brother, and how deceitfully we concealed that Wickedness from our honest Father; Now we see our Sin in our Punishment.*

Again consider, 2. *That when Judgments are threatened, or impending; the Lord doth, in his Word, specially call for this Duty, of searching out Sin.*

Thus, when there were grievous Judgments upon Israel, what was the Advice that was given to them by the weeping Prophet Jeremiah, in the Name of the Lord, Lam. iii. 40. *Let us search and try our Ways, and turn again unto the Lord, &c. q. d. Let us with utmost Care and Diligence enquire into the Cause, why the Lord is angry, and pleads a Controversy with us. I give you an Instance to the same*

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same Purpose in the *New Testament*. The *Corinthians* misbehaved, and profaned the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper; and this brought Judgments on them. *For this Cause many of them were weak and sickly, and many died, 1 Cor. xi. 30.* Well, what is the Direction given them, to prevent both their Sin and their Danger; *ver. 28. But let a Man examine himself, and so let him eat of that Bread, and drink of that Cup.* But on this Head, consider, 3. That this searching out of our Sins, and particularly, under Judgments threatned or inflicted, hath been the commendable Practice of the People of God.

David was a Man frequently visited with heavy Afflictions of various Kinds, and we find him much employed in the Exercise of searching out his Sins; *Psal. cxix. 59. I thought on my Ways, and turned my Feet unto thy Testimonies:* And because he knew the Deceitfulness of his Heart, and that it would be dangerous to trust it; He pleads once and again, That the Lord would help him to examine and search himself. *Psal. xxvi. 2. Examine me, O Lord, and prove me; try my Reins and my Heart, Psal. cxxxix. 23, 24. Search me, O God, and know my Heart; try me, and know my Thoughts; and see if there be any wicked Way in me, and lead me in the Way everlasting.* How earnest is the holy Man, to know the worst of his Case! A great Sign of his Integrity. But alas, there are few of this Temper in our Day. Ah! how many of all Ranks among us do either declare their Sin as *Sodom*, and hide not, while they abandon themselves to work all Manner of Wickedness with Greediness; or else they cover their secret Pranks with the Mask of a fair Outside of Morality, or a hypocritical Profession of Religion: But mind what God says, *Prov. xxviii. 13. He that covereth Sins shall not prosper.* — So much for this Head, I go on to consider.

II. *How Sin may be searched, and found out; when Judgements are threatned or inflicted.*

I give you Five Words upon it.

1. *Observe the common publick Sins of a Place, and People; when Judgments are threatned or impending.*

Now, tho' these Sins be open and common, yet alas! They are overlooked by the far greatest Part, and but little thought on by any. Therefore, even these notour and publick Sins should be searched

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ed out, considered, confessed, mourned for, and forsaken. These Sins point out Judgments, as with the Finger. What says the Lord to the Prophet *Jeremiah* Chap. vii. 17. *Seest thou not what they do in the Cities of Judah, and in the Streets of Jerusalem, &c. Hear the Judgment threatned for these their open and avowed Transgressions; Ver. 20. Therefore, thus saith the Lord God, behold mine Anger and my Fury shall be poured out upon this Place, upon Man, and upon Beast, and upon the Trees of the Field, and upon the Fruit of the Ground, and it shall burn, and shall not be quenched. q. d. Your visible and open Transgressions shall be punished with open and visible Judgments, even with consuming Strokes. But.*

2. *Mark narrowly, when and where, and by whom, these Sins that are common and publick are winked at and tolerated.*

When Magistrates and Ministers do wink at, and tolerate these Sins, which they ought to reprove and punish, it provokes the Lord to take the Sword in his own Hand, and to inflict sad and dreadful Judgments. A plain Instance of this we have, *1 Sam. i. 3. Chap. ii. 12. &c. and Chap. iii. 14. --- Eli would not severely Check and Correct his Children for their Debauching and Misbehaviour; therefore God takes the Sword in his own Hand: Ye know what was threatned, and ye know what came of it. God visited both Eli and his House with awful Judgments. We may say to our Sin and Shame, there are many heinous Sins in Scotland, in Principle and Practice, which have been too much winked at and tolerated both by Magistrates and Ministers, and we have Cause to fear God will take the Sword in his own Hand.*

3. *Would you search out the Sin or Sins, that provoke God to inflict Judgments, you would observe how, and where the Contagion of publick Sins hath spread it self. And indeed, my Beloved, Sin is of a very infectious Nature; one Sinner will have more Influence on hundreds, to draw them into an evil Course; than a hundred godly Men will have, either by their Counsel, or Example, to make a wicked Man leave his Wickedness. What is the Reason of this? Even because Sin is ingrained in our corrupt Nature, which is prone thereunto, and readily admits of Tentations, from the Practice and Example of others; whereas, that which is Good, is strange to us, and cannot be wrought in us, but by the powerful*

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Influence of Grace. Now, when Sins of a hainous Nature, do spread themselves far and near, among all Ranks of Persons, and in every Corner of the Land, the Lord is provoked to inflict awful Judgments, as a Fire, to purge the Air of its contagious Quality. See *Daniel ix. 11.* *All Israel have transgressed the Law, even by departing, that they might not obey thy Voice; therefore the Curse is poured upon us, &c.* — And now, dearly beloved in the Lord, are there not innumerable hainous Sins abounding among us? O what Atheism, irreligious Superstition, profane Swearing, Sabbath-breaking, Undutifulness in our respective Stations and Relations, Murder, Uncleaness, Thefts, Rapine, Fraud, and Injustice, Lying, Calumniating, Coverousness, and such like? Are not these Sins cloathed with aggravating Circumstances? And are they not to be found through the Land, in every Corner, and among all Ranks? Alas! Sirs, Sins hath broken out among us, like impetuous Waters, when the Flood-Gates are opened, and they are like to carry us down the Stream. Sure, if God in his Mercy prevent it not, we have Cause to fear sudden and terrible Judgments, for our spreading and growing Abominations. A ripe Cropt of Sin pretends a Harvelt of Wrath approaching, and when we look through the Land, we have Cause to dread this.

4. Would we search out Sins, that bring on Judgments; *Let us consider how far Professors of Religion are involved in the Sins of the Time.* Ah! Sirs, These are the Sins that kindle God's Wrath mightily. Wherefore? Because they make the Name of God to be blasphemed, *2 Sam. xii, 14.* For these Sins the old World was drowned. *Gen. vi. 2, 5, 6.* see what the Lord says, *Deut. xxxii. 19.* — *The Lord abhorred them, because of the provoking of Sons and Daughters.* When Professors go astray with others, in Unruliness and Carelessness, when they learn the Way of the Wicked, and are drawn into their pernicious Ways: How can we expect to escape a Rod? God's Faithfulness to his Covenant will not allow him to let his own People run on in the Way of the Wicked, without a severe Check, which often times is done by a Rod, and even by making them to suffer in a common Calamity, though they get their Soul for a Prey. *For the Lord will not take his loving Kindness from them, even when he visiteth their Transgressions with*
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Rods;

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Rods, *Psalm lxxxix.* 33, 34. Alas! Sirs, for the Professors of our Day. If our Fathers were to look upon us, they would misken us, we are so far degenerate from the Strictness and Liveliness that obtain'd in their Day. Alas! we have fallen from our first Love! And have we not Reason to fear, that our Candlestick shall be removed from us. We may look for this, and all the dreadful Miseries and Calamities that use to attend such a Judgment, except we Repent.

5. Would we search out Sins, that bring on Judgments, my dearly Beloved, to be plain with you, let every one of us try our selves; let us look into our own Breasts; let us consider our own evil Ways and Doings. I have, in the former Heads, pointed to you some general Considerations, whereby we may have a View of the Sins of the Land, for which we may conclude, God is contending with us at this Day, and for which we may fear, he will yet further contend with us. But rest not here in your Search, my dear Friends, general Views of Sin will never touch and affect your Heart, you'll never be in a right Manner impressed with a Sense of the Sins that bring on Judgments, till you see your own Sins: And how can you see them? How can you be affected with them, if ye search not for them? There is a great Inclination in People to seek out the Sins of others, to accomplish a diligent Search, how behaves this Man, and the other Man. How ready are Men to apply the Rebukes both of Word and Providences to others; and not to themselves? How few are crying out, *What have I done?* O! Sirs, for the Lord's Sake, go into your own Breasts, and search out diligently the Evils that you find there, and I believe, if you be in good Earnest, you may, through the Lord's Grace, have it to say, the more you ply this Work, that there are shewed to you still greater and greater Abominations, for there is an evil Treasure in every Mans Heart. Look also to your Ways, consider the lamentable Issue and Product of a corrupt Heart, in the innumerable Transgressions of Thought, Word, and Deed; of Omission and Commission, in every Circumstance, and Turn of your Life. *Let a Man examine himself,* 1 Cor. xi. 28. Let us consider every one of us, wherein we follow the Sins of a corrupt Time; let us search and try our selves; lest Our Sins kindle the Fire of
God's

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God's Wrath. And I may say, and have good Warrant to say it, That if every one of us search narrowly into our own Heart and Way, we will acknowledge we find more Evil in our selves, than we can do in all the World. Wherefore? Because we can find no Faults in others, but such as outwardly appear in the Life and Conversation; but every Man and Woman that is acquainted with their own Heart, will discern innumerable Multitudes of inward Faults, wicked Thoughts, and vain Imaginations, which are the polluted Streames that flow from the corrupt Fountain of our treacherous, deceitful, and desperately wicked Heart, which the World cannot observe. And yet these Sins are highly provoking unto a holy God. Therefore, he calls to Jerusalem, *O Jerusalem, wash THY HEART from Wickedness, that thou may be saved. How long shall thy vain Thoughts lodge within thee?* Jer. iv. 14. My Friends, there's not a serious Christian acquaint with his own Heart and Way, but will be ready to say with Paul, *1 Tim. i. 15. — I am the chief of Sinners.* I know more Evil of my self, than of all the World. Thus I have suggested to you some Things concerning this great Duty of searching out Sin, that brings on Judgments. But now, you will say, for what End must Sin be searched out? I Answer, That the accursed Thing SIN, may be taken away. O! that it were taken away from SCOTLAND! O! that it were taken away from each of us. This leads unto the III. Thing upon this Doctrine, *That the accursed Thing Sin, being searched and found, should be taken away; and how this may be done.* I offer you six Words upon this Head.

1. If we would have the accursed Thing, Sin, taken away, we must be pierced and pricked at the Heart for Sin: Godly Sorrow must be wrought in the Heart, by the Spirit of God; then we may look that Sin shall be taken away. *2 Cor. vii. 10. Godly Sorrow worketh Repentance unto Salvation, not to be repented of.* — And that we may know what this Godly Sorrow is, that we may not take the Sorrow of the World, for this Sorrow after a godly Sort, we have it described in the 11. Verse *For behold this self-same Thing, that ye sorrow'd after a godly Sort, what Carefulness it wrought in you, &c.*

2. When the Heart is thus touched with a Sense of Sin, there will be a free and sincere, a humble and unreserved Confession made of Sin unto

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G.O.D. And when the LORD is about to take away Sin, either by forgiving it, or by cleansing from its Filth, he works this penitent Confession of Sin in the Soul; 1 John i. 9. *If we confess our Sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our Sins, and to cleanse us from all Unrighteousness.* He is a faithful God, he hath passed his Word upon it; and the Word of the LORD shall stand. When the sorrowful Sinner is made to take with his Faults, and in the Bitterness of his Soul, to acknowledge them before the Lord, it is a clear Token of their being taken away. There is a strange Word, *Psal. xxxii. 5. I acknowledged my Sin unto thee, and mine Iniquity have I not hid; I said, I will confess my Transgressions unto the Lord.* (He was even but about Confessing, but minting at it) And what comes of it? *Thou forgavest the Iniquity of my Sin.* When Nathan the Prophet said to David, *Thou art the Man,* 2 Sam. xii. 7. David confesseth, Verse 13. *I have sinned against the Lord;* he took with his Fault, he neither deny'd it, nor extenuated it, as many would do in our Day. And what follows? Nathan said unto David, *The Lord also hath put away thy Sin.* O Sirs! If we were making humble and penitent Confession of Sin, we might look for the Lord's returning unto us in Mercy; but alas! this is a hardned Generation. Can we expect that ever it shall go well with us, or with the Land, till we come to such humble Acknowledgments of Sin? Nay, till we come to this, God will not give over his Controversy with us: See what the Lord says, *Hof. v. 14, 15.-- I will be unto Ephraim as a Lion, and as a young Lion unto the House of Judah; I, even I, will tear and go away; I will rake away, and none shall rescue them; I will go, and return to my Place.* A very sad Threatning: But how long, Lord, how long wilt thou tarry? It follows, *Till they acknowledge their Offence, and seek my Face.* I conclude this Head with a remarkable Word, to shew you how much the Lord looks to this penitent Acknowledgment of Sin; and to let you see how necessary it is, if we look for Sin being taken away. *Jer. iii. 12, 13. Go, and proclaim these Words toward the North, and say, Return thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord, and I will not cause mine Anger to fall upon you; for I am merciful, saith the Lord, and I will not keep mine Anger for ever.* Here's a kind Invitation, a gracious Promise, and a sweet Encouragement. But mark what follows, Only acknowledge thine Iniquity, &c. And then

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then he goes on to a particular Enumeration of their Sins, and renews his gracious Invitations to them, to return from their Backslidings. You see of what Weight and Importance the Acknowledgment of Iniquity is. O Sirs! what a Token for Good would it be, if Scotland were come to a free and frank Confession of Guilt? But alas! there was never less Appearance of it, than at this Day; tho' the Hand of God be upon us. O plead with God, for a pouring out of the Spirit of Grace and Supplication.

3. *Upon Confession of Sin, the Mind will be otherwise disposed than before:* The poor, humble, confessing Penitent, will loath the Sin he loved before; Luke vii. 37. There was a poor Woman, her Name was, A SINNER, a notorious Whore, a common Strumpet; However, God's Grace, that is free, took hold of her; And what did she? *She washes Christ's Feet with her Tears, and wiped them with the Hairs of her Head.* That Hair, which probably she dressed up, so, as to proclaim her Lewdness before; now, when she gets a humble Sense of her Sin, she makes it a Towel to wipe Christ's Feet with: A plain Evidence of her Love to Christ, of her loathing of her Sin, and of her sincere forsaking of it. And when it comes to that with a poor Soul, Sin is taken away.

4. *When that Loathing of Sin begets a true and firm Resolution and Purpose, never to give Sin such Harbour in the Heart, and such Sway in the Life as before:* When the penitent Sinner sincerely designs and endeavours, through Grace, never to return unto his former evil Practices, it is an Evidence that Sin is taken away, that the Sinner is pardoned, and the Strength of Sin broken. And this is the Way to get the accursed Thing removed. Psal. xxxix. 1. David says, *I will take heed to my Ways, that I sin not with my Tongue.* He resolves to keep a strict Guard upon himself, that he will narrowly inspect his whole Behaviour, and particularly, that he will watch against the Sins of the Tongue, which are no less dangerous, than easily fallen into. Of a like Nature is that excellent Speech of Elihu, Job xxxiv. 31, 32. *Surely it is meet to be said unto God, I have born Chastisement, I will not offend any more. That which I see not, teach thou me; if I have done Iniquity, I will do no more.* O Sirs! if Scotland were come to such a Frame and Resolution, it would be a Token for Good; but alas! we are so far from that penitent Frame, that the
Language

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Language of the Practice of many nay of the Generality among all Ranks, is like that of the rebellious Israelites, *Jer. ii. 25. I have loved Strangers, and after them will I go.* Well, Sirs, while it is thus with us, we cannot expect the accursed Thing will be taken away; and while the accursed Thing is thus harboured and entertained, what can we expect but the Accomplishment of that Word, *Isaiah ix. 12, 13. For all this his Anger is not turned away, but his Hand is stretched out still: For the People turneth not unto him that smiteth them, neither do they seek the Lord of Hosts, &c.* O then, turn from your Iniquities, if you would look for the Lord's turning away from the Fierceness of his Anger.

5. Then may we look upon the accursed Thing being taken away, when that Purpose of abandoning Sin, in order to a more sure Performance, is ratified by way of a solemn Promise and Covenant; as in the 10th Chap. of *Ezra*, read the Chapter at your Leisure. You'll see in it the Frame of a returning, penitent People, clearly set forth. Ver. 1. You'll find *Ezra* Praying, Confessing, Weeping, casting himself down before the House of God; and you'll find the People, even a very great Congregation, weeping very sore. Ver. 2. You'll find *Shechaniah*, in the Name of the People, confessing their Trespases, particularly, in taking strange Wives; and yet expressing some Hope in the Lord in this Case. But what is the Result of this their Exercise? Do they rest satisfied with this Weeping and Confessing? No. They are in good Earnest: And that they may be the more firmly bound unto Reformation, they resolve to make a Covenant with God, to put away all these strange Wives; Ver. 3. And this Resolution we find is instantly put in Execution: For it follows, Ver. 5. That *Ezra* made the Chief Priests, the Levites, and all Israel, to swear, That they should do according to this Word; and they swore. And we find in the following Part of the Chapter, they performed according to their Oath. Again, we find such a solemn Transaction, *Neh. ix.* where, after a penitent Confession of Sin, acknowledgment of Mercies, and fervent Pleading with God, they come to this Resolution, Ver. 38. And because of all this, we make a sure Covenant, and write it, and our Princes, Levites, and Priests Seal unto it. The Day was, when there was such a Frame in Scotland; but alas! how far are we now from

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from that Temper. But it will never be well with us, till such an Humble, Penitent, and Covenanting Frame return again. But,

6. *When there are faithful Endeavours, answerable unto these Purposes, Vows, Promises, or Covenants, it is a good Token.* This I may gather from *Psal. lvi. 12. Thy Vows are upon me, O God.* — What means that? it is, *q. d.* I'm under a strong Obligation, I'm in Debt to the Lord, and the Debt must be discharged. Well, what says he? *I will render Praise unto thee.* Here he sets himself to perform his Vows, which ly as a heavy Burden upon his Mind, till he get them fulfilled. When a Person, or People, are thus sincerely engaged in a Work of Reformation, it is an Evidence, they are in good Terms with God; tho' perhaps they make no great Progress therein: But it is a sad Sign that the accursed Thing is not taken away, and that the Lord's Displeasure continues, when there is a losing Ground, and a going backward: And, alas! this is too evidently our Case this Day. Lord pity and help; for we are an unthriveing People.

But now, after all I have said on this Head, let us always remember, That there is no taking away of the accursed Thing, no getting Sin done away, but by the Application of the Blood of Christ, by the Spirit working Faith in us, to see unto that Blood of Atonement, for Reconciliation and Remission. These Things I have mentioned, are *either Duties* on our Part, which the poor Sinner is enabled, through Grace, to perform, not as meritorious or efficient Causes of the taking away of Sin; but as Concomitant Means, which the Lord hath connected with that Privilege; as meet Dispositions in the Subject, which yet are wrought in the Soul by efficacious Grace: Or, they are Evidences of the Privilege it self, whereby it may be known, if Sin be taken away. And therefore, let us take heed, to give these Things their own Place, and no more; and above all, let us look up to the Lord, for the Application of his Righteousness, to take away the Guilt of Sin; and the Influence of his Spirit, to take away its Filth, and subdue its Power.

Now,

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Now, I shall conclude this 2d *Doctrine*, with a Brief Word of APPLICATION.

My dearly beloved in the Lord, it very much concerns us all, to seek out the accursed Thing, that it may be taken away, as we would desire the Flame of God's Wrath to be asswaged; which is burning against us in Judgments; in Part inflicted, and in further Judgments threatned, which we may look for, if we continue hardened in our Sins.

We are met this Day, my dear Friends, to fast, and pray, to seek the Lord's Face, his Grace and Favour, and to humble ourselves in his Sight: And O! that this Day may indeed be a *Day of deep Humiliation*! O that the Lord would pour out upon us this Day, a Spirit of Grace and Supplication. Then we might hope it might be a *Day of Reconciliation*. We are met this Day to covenant with God, for our Duty, and against our Sins; and if we could be helped sincerely and cordially in this Exercise, it would be a good Token of the Removal of the Lord's Wrath: We see, as I hinted before, this was the Way of the Lord's People of Old, in the 10th Chapter of *Ezra*, and 9th Chapter of *Nehemiah*; The Children of *Israel*, after their Bondage, on a Fast-day, covenanted with God, to put away their strange Wives, they resolved on it willingly, they were in good Earnest, and performed accordingly; They saw, that to take them, was a Sin; to hold them, was to continue in their Sin, and so still a greater Sin; and therefore, to put them away was their present Duty. But alas! my Friends, many among us, they love their Sins as their very Souls, as their Right-eye, or their Right-hand. They will assoon part with the dearest Member of their Body, as give up with their beloved Sins; nay, they will rather hazard their eternal Damnation, than part with the carnal Pleasures of Sin, which are but for a Season; and God knows, how short that Season may be to some of you. We have heard of some, that have been suddenly pulled off the Stage of Time, when they have been working hot in the Pursuit of their Lusts. O dreadful Surprise! to be hurried, in a Moment, from the Fire of sinful Lusts, to the unquenchable Fire of Hell. But, poor, silly, deluded Souls will not believe this. But mind, I tell you, you may come to believe it, when you cannot mend it.

My

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My Beloved, what will it avail us, to make a Fashion of humbling our selves this Day; if we put not away the accursed Thing; I assure you, neither our Persons, nor our Prayers, nor any of our Services whatsoever, will be acceptable to God, all will be but lost Labour, and worse; for thereby our Sins will be hainously aggravated, if notwithstanding of our Profession of Humiliation, we still retain our Sins. But perhaps, Sirs, there are some Folk makes little Account, either of retaining or forsaking of Sin; they see little Good in the forsaking of Sin, and little Ill in retaining it. They are not exercised about such Matters, but follow the Swing of their own present Apprehensions; they pursue their carnal Inclinations, without thinking on what is to come. But, I'll tell you, what both the retaining, and the forsaking of Sin is like. *The retaining of Sin is like these four Things.* (1.) It is like the bitter Waters of *Marah*, *Exod.* xv. 23. The People could not drink of them, they were so bitter. Alas! many take a cursed Pleasure in drinking these bitter Waters; but it is because they have lost the Sense of the Evil of Sin: Their Taste is vitiated, through the Deceitfulness of Sin, and Power of Temptation. But this alters not the Nature of Sin, or the Evil of retaining it. (2.) It is like the heavy Head of the Ax, that made it sink in the Water; *2 Kings* vi. 7. Sin retained, my Beloved, will sink your Souls to the lowest Hell. (3.) It is like the thick Cloud that hindered the Prayers of the People to go up to Heaven; *Lam.* iii. 44. *Thou hast covered thy self with a Cloud, that our Prayers should not pass through.* And that this Cloud is the Cloud of our Sins, is evident, from what is said of the Removal of our Transgressions; *Isaiah* xlv. 22. *I have blotted out as a thick Cloud thy Transgressions, and as a Cloud thy Sins.* ---- (4.) It is like the wild Gourds, that brought Poison and Death into the Pot. *2 Kings* iv. 39, 40. Whatever poor deluded Sinners may now think of their Sins, they will issue in eternal Death, if they be not taken away; For *the Wages of Sin is Death*. *Rom.* vi. 23. But, upon the other Hand, The forsaking of Sin, and the Removal of it, is like these four Things. (1.) 'Tis like the Tree cast into the Waters of *Marah*, that made them sweet again. (2.) It is like the Stick cast into the Water, that made the Iron to swim. (3.) It is like the Wind that drives away the Cloud. (4.) It is like the Meal cast into the Pot, that makes it wholesome.

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Well then, there's a great Odds between the retaining of the accursed Thing, and the removing of it. And would you, this Day, have your Persons and Performances accepted of God, which is a most desirable Thing; would you have the Wrath of God and his Judgments removed from you: Then say, and say with the Heart, with penitent Ephraim, *What have I any more to do with Idols?* Hos. xiv. 8. Say, Lord, take Heart and Hand from my Sins. O that there were such an Heart in you! If there were such a Frame, and such a Practice; we might look to see the Removal of the sad Effects of Sin, that are evident at this Day. My dearly Beloved, Sin is like to overthrow us, at this Day; and if we continue to contend with God by our Sins, we will be ruined by them. *If we walk contrary unto him, he will walk contrary unto us.* Lev. xxvi. Chap. 21, 23, 27, 40, 24, 28, 41. *Verses.* Therefore, let us search it out, humble our selves before the Lord, and return unto him, that he may turn from the Fierceness of his Anger: And in Order to this, Cry mightily to the Lord this Day, that he may give a humble, penitent, contrite Heart, a Heart of Flesh; and that he may take away the Heart of Stone. For, alas! many in this Generation are Proof against all the Warnings they get, either in Ordinances or Providences. But mind, I tell you from the Word of the Lord, *He that hardeneth his Neck, shall not prosper,* Job ix. 4. *He that being often reprov'd, hardeneth his Neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without Remedy;* Prov. xxix. 1. O! Then take Warning, and flee from the Wrath to come. This leads unto the next Point.

DOCT. III. From EzeK. xxxiii. 1. &c.

That it is the Duty of Ministers, as faithful Watchmen, to warn People of Judgments and Calamities, which they see a coming, and the Duty of People to take warning.

We are set upon the Lord's Watch-Tower, we must sound an Alarm, and tell you, *There is Wrath coming, there is Wrath coming.* As the Lord lives, and as I am speaking to you, that see and hear me this Day, if you take not warning, if you search not out, and put not away the accursed Thing, *There is Wrath coming, there is Vengeance abiding you.* There is no Bounding here. I warn you, and I beseech you take Warning, as you would not have your Blood upon your own Heads, *There is Wrath coming, there is Wrath coming.*

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ing. Out of the Way of God's Wrath, by fleeing to his Mercy through Christ.

Perhaps you'd say, Minister, these are sad Tydings indeed. But what is your Ground for such a Message.

My Beloved, I speak not without Ground, and I hope, some of you will be convinced of it ere we part. I have two Sorts of Reasons, for warning you, that there is Wrath coming.

I. There are *five* Reasons from God.

II. From Man.

I. There's a Sort of Reasons why we may conclude there is a Storm coming from God.

And I name Five of them to you.

1. The Lord is packing up his Jewels, and some of 'em in the midst of their Strength. You know, when a Man is putting up his Plenishing, it says, he is going to Flie. My Friends, I am afraid, and woe's me for it, that God hath a mind to depart from us. Why? He has been packing up many of his Jewels within these few Years. The Righteous perish (i. e. from among the living in this World) and no Man layeth it to Heart; and merciful Men are taken away, none considering that the Righteous is taken away from the Evil to come, Isa. lvii. 1. They are taken home to their Rest, and that is a Token, there is a Storm coming. My Friends, God hath taken away many a godly Minister, and Christian Men and Women, who were Standard-Bearers within these few Years, and yet few have been seriously laying it to Heart, few looking upon this, as a Token of the Lord's Anger. But

2. Another sad Token of Wrath from God is, His withdrawing of his Presence. When God will not be spoken to, that is an ill Token. What! saith the Lord, Hos. v. 15. I will go and return to my Place, till they acknowledge their Offence; I will turn my Back upon you. It was a sad Token of a Storm to the Spouse, when her beloved had withdrawn himself; Song v. 6. It was a sad Token, when the Lord said to Moses; Exod. xxxii. 9, 10. And the Lord said unto Moses, I have seen this People, and behold it is a stiff-necked People. Now therefore let me alone, that my Wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them. — When God withdraws from his People, that would stand in the Gap; when he will

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not hear their Prayers; when there's a Restraint upon their Spirits, in pleading for a sinful Generation; it is a sad Prognostick of a Storm coming. O how lamentable is the Case of a People! when Ministers and Christians cry, and the Lord will not hear them. Nay, when he will not be entreated for a People. What says the Lord, *Jer. vii. 16.* Pray not thou for this People, neither lift up Cry, nor Prayer for them, neither make Intercession to me; for I will not hear thee. What saith the Lord, *Jer. xiv. 11, 12.* Pray not for this People for their Good, when they fast, I will not hear their Cry, and when they offer Burnt-Offerings and an Oblation, I will not accept them; but I will consume them by the Sword, and by the Famine, and by the Pestilence. A sad Token, the Lord is Angry, when he thus withdraws. My Friends, we are afraid, that the Lord is about to visit Scotland with dreadful Judgments, we fear the Fire of his Wrath be kindled; and we are so much more afraid of this, that alas! many are nowise concerned abg it at all. Alas! my Friends, God is withdrawn; he is far off from Ministers and Ordinances: Where is that Life and Power, that sometimes accompanied the Ordinances, and especially Fast-Days, and Communion-Days? Alas! we are fallen from our first Love. *v. ii. 2.* Alas! we are become like Stocks and Stones, a sad Token of the Lord's withdrawing, and of Wrath coming.

3. Another Sign from God of Wrath coming, is, *The Lord's gradual Procedure in his Judgments.* This says, worse are a coming; and that these gentle Rods are but Forerunners of more heavy and dreadful Visitations. What says Christ, *Matth. xxiv. 6, 7, 8.* Ye shall hear of Wars, and rumours of Wars, — Nation shall rise against Nation, and Kingdom against Kingdom, and there shall be Famines, and Pestilences, and Earthquakes in divers Places. Well, these are Judgments terrible enough; but what says the Lord, Verse 8. All these are the Beginnings of Sorrows; for, worse than these follow in the next Verses, *They shall deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you, &c.* There is a Beginning of Sorrows, and a Procedure therein, till these Sorrows at length issue in the Lake, that burns with Fire and Brimstone. And while the Lord is dealing with a Person or People, in the Way of his Judgments; the plain and obvious Language of them is this; If lesser Judgments do not reform, greater

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greater will still be inflicted: For the Event of God's dealing after this Manner is either Reformation or Ruin. Concerning this gradual Procedure of God in his Judgments, you may read at your Leisure; Ezek. Chap. ix. x, xi. But particularly you find, that *The Glory of the Lord God of Israel went up from the Cherub, whereupon he was, to the Threshold of the House* --- Ezek. ix. 3. And that *the Glory of the Lord departed from off the Threshold of the House, and stood over the Cherubims*, Chap. x. 18. And then, *That the Glory of the Lord went up from the midst of the City, and stood upon the Mountains* --- Chap. xi. 23. Here's a gradual Procedure. And hath not the Lord dealt even so with us? Hath he not visited us sometimes with one Stroke, sometimes with another? What is the Language of all this, but that he would give People fair Warning, that by all possible Means they be brought to a due Sense of their Sins, that they may turn from them, and escape the Wrath that is threatned. O! Sirs, be afraid, lest the Lord take his leave of us, and go unto the Mountains, unto some uncultivated Place of the World, and make it his inclosed Garden; for the Lord will not want a Church; when he removes from one Place, he sets up his Tabernacle in another. It should indeed be our Concern, that *his Way may be known upon Earth, and his saving Health among all Nations*, Psal. lxxvii. 2. And the Day is coming, when, *from the rising of the Sun, even unto the going down of the same, his Name shall be great among the Gentiles*, --- Mal. i. 11. But this should not diminish our Concern for our selves, that the Lord may yet keep up his Tabernacle among us. But Alas! when we consider the Lord's way of Procedure by lesser Judgments, and that hitherto we have not been reformed, what can we look for, but ruining Strokes; *For his Spirit will not always strive with Man*; Gen. vi. 3. Is there not a Conscience among you to observe it? Hath not the Lord been warning us by lesser Judgments? And is not this his ordinary Way? For he is loath to depart from a covenanted People; but when they are not reclaimed by other Means, hath he not removed the Candlestick from them? The Church of the Jews, the seven Churches of Asia are known Instances hereof. And what Ground have we to expect, that the Lord should step out of his ordinary Way for us? He hath visited

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visited the Church of *France* with dreadful Persecution, and other Judgments; they, who were once a famous Church, are now drunk with the Wine of the Fornications of the Scarlet coloured Whore. *Britain* and *Ireland* have been in no small Danger of being reduced into the same lamentable Circumstances; I hope you have not forgot what wide steps were taken towards this in the late Reigns. God hath been pleased mercifully to interpose, and to send us a seasonable and remarkable Deliverance: But are we yet reformed? Alas! for the misimprovement of this our Mercy. Well, the Lord hath been for some Years visiting us with Dearth and Famine. My Beloved, if we take not warning by this, there are many Arrows in God's Quiver, and we may be afraid, that the next will be as a Dart, that will pierce into the very Heart of our most valuable Concerns and Privileges, both Civil and Sacred.

4. Another Token of Wrath coming from God, is, *The joint Cry of his Heralds*. When the Trumpet soundeth, it is a Call to the Battle. God's Ministers have been sent out these several Years, not with an Olive Branch, a Sign of Peace. No, These are not the Words of God's Mouth, *Ezek. iii. 17*. What says the Lord there, *Son of Man, I have made thee a Watchman unto the House of Israel, therefore hear the Word At My Mouth, and give them Warning FROM ME*. What says *Habakkuk, Chap. ii. 1, 2*. *I will stand upon my Watch, and set me upon the Tower, and will watch to see what he will say unto me, and what I shall answer, when I am reproved. And the Lord answered me, and said, write the Vision and make it plain upon Tables, that he may run that readeth it. What means all this, say ye? That is, Minister, take this Message to the People from me, tell them plainly, there is a Stroke coming; make it so plain, that he may run that readeth it. My Friends, we have all Ground to warn you of Judgments coming, and I am persuaded you have not wanted Warning. There is not an honest Minister in Scotland, but hath been setting the Trumpet to his Mouth, and sounding the Alarm. And think you all this is for nought? No; Though desolating Judgments may be for sometime delayed, they will come, if we be not reformed by other Means; and ye will think them soon enough, come when they will. *Hab. ii. 3. The Vision is yet for an appointed Time, but at the**

End

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End it shall speak and not lie, though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry. Alas! People will not see God's Hand that is lifted up, but they shall see it; Isa. xxvi. 11. My Friends, I must discharge my Conscience this Day, and give you plain and fair Warning, that I may be free of your Blood; I'll tell you all that hear me this Day, this plain Word, I am perswaded, that God's Wrath and Judgments shall not be quite removed from SCOTLAND, till we be either reformed or ruined! The Lord grant we may be Reformed, and that Ruin may be prevented. Remember, my dear Friends, such Warnings from God's Heralds will not fall to the Ground. O! that we may in time consider our Ways, and return unto the Lord.

5thly, I shall but mention another Token from God of Wrath coming, and that is, *The falling out of Prodigies, Things extraordinary, beyond the Laws of Nature.* There were Signs in Babylon, and they had a Language; Dan. v. 5. There was a Sign, *In the same Hour came forth Fingers of a Man's Hand, and wrote over against the Candlestick on the Plaister of the Wall of the King's Palace.* — Belshazzar was carousing with his Princes and Lords, and his Whores too, with the Vessels of the Temple, when this awful Sign appeared, which presently damped him; He knew such an extraordinary Thing was not for Nought; His Countenance changed, his Thoughts troubled him; the Joints of his Loins were loosed, and his Knees smote one against another. Well, what is the Meaning of this extraordinary Sign. See ver. 26, 27, 28. MENE, God hath numbred thy Kingdom, and finished it. TEKEL, thou art weighed in the Ballances, and found wanting. PERES; Thy Kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians. Our Lord tells us of Signs, that shall come before the Last Day. Luk. xxi. 26, 27. And it hath been observed, That there have been remarkable Signs, before the Calamities and Distresses of Churches and Nations. Many such Things there were before the Destruction of Jerusalem. I will not come over what Prodigies and Signs have fallen out, and have been observed in the Air, in the Earth, and in the Water, within these Thirty four Years, both in England and Scotland: But I shall only say this, God will interpret these Things in his own Time. And I think, these Things should be made another Use of, than Table-talk. Now from the Consideration

tion of these Things, from God; have we not Cause to think, a Storm is abiding us. But I proceed unto another Kind of Reasons, why I think there's a Storm coming.

II. There are *Reasons from Man*, Reasons from the Consideration of our selves, and our Sins.

My dearly Beloved, consider and lay it to Heart. Doth not Iniquity abound among all Ranks? And, doth not such a Thriving of Sin, such a Growth and Ripeness in all Manner of Wickedness import, that a Harvest of Wrath is approaching. See *Joel iii. 13. Put ye in the Sickle, for the Harvest is ripe; come, get ye down, for the Press is full, the Fats overflow*: What means the Prophet by all this? The following Words explain it, *for their Wickedness is great; great Wickedness ripens a People for Wrath*. My Friends, God hath charged the Sickle to be put into Scotland, for the Harvest is ripe; we are Drop ripe for Judgments. And the longer these Judgments are delayed, they will be the heavier when they come. We are fast filling up our Cup; and as we treasure up Sin, God treasures up Wrath; and come when it will, it will be dreadful and surprising: But 'tis a sore Matter, that People will not lay Matters to Heart, till they be swallowed up in the Billows of God's Wrath. Alas! many poor Sinners in our Day, do, *after their Hardness, and impenitent Heart, treasure up to themselves Wrath, against the Day of Wrath, and Revelation of the righteous Judgment of God*, *Rom. ii. 5*. Do ye remember that Word, *Isa. xxx. 33. Tophet is ordained of Old; yea for the King it is prepared, he hath made it deep and large, the Pile thereof is Fire, and much Wood; the Breath of the Lord like a Stream of Brimstone doth kindle it*. The Lord hath kindled a Fire in Hell, the Fire of his Wrath, 'tis deep and large, for Great and Small, Kings and Princes, Nobles and Commons; and the Sins of Men are as the Fewel to kindle the Fire, and encrease the Flame. Little do Men think, when they are breaking God's Laws, that they are kindling the Fire of Hell for themselves. Little do they consider, what a fearful Thing it is, to fall into the Hands of the living God, who is a consuming Fire. There are many Folk make little Account of their Sins. Nay, Sirs, there are some Sins, that God will reckon for, that many Folk never look upon as Sins at all. Hear what the Lord says; *Matth. xii. 36. But I say unto you,*
this

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That every idle Word that Men shall speak, they shall give Account thereof in the Day of Judgment; For by thy Words thou shalt be justified, and by thy Words thou shalt be condemned. Oh! what a sad Reckoning will many have, not only for their idle and unprofitable Words, but for their profane, wicked, and abominable Language. How many Folk give loose Reins to that unruly Member the Tongue, which should be kept in as with a Bridle. Think on that Word, *Jam. iii. 6. The Tongue is a Fire, a World of Iniquity; — It defileth the whole Body, and setteth on Fire the Course of Nature, and it is set on Fire of Hell.* But, Further, We must account for the Wickedness of our Thoughts, as well as our Words; *Jer. iv. 14. The Lord calls to Jerusalem to wash their Hearts from Wickedness;* and expostulates with them in these Words, *How long shall thy vain Thoughts lodge within thee?* O! consider the abounding of Sin among us. But, what do I speak of sinful and vain Thoughts, and idle Words; Is not the Land filled with all Manner of Abominations in Practice. What open Profanity? What Contempt of God, and of Religion? What despising of Ordinances? What Cursing, Swearing, Sabbath-breaking? What Murder, Adultery, Fornication? What Covetousness, Oppression, Fraud, and Injustice of all Sorts? What Lying, Backbiting, and Slandering? What Worldly-mindedness? What inordinate Affection to the Things of this Life? and such like. O the crying Sins of this Generation! O if we could cry aloud, and not spare, and tell you your Transgressions and Sins; But, alas! you will not be told, you will not hear, you will not consider and regard, you will not reform and amend. Woe's me for it; This too evidently says, we are ripening for Wrath. But whether ye will hear, or whether ye will forbear, I must give you faithful Warning both of *your Sin*, and of *your Danger*, and of *your present Duty*, as you would have threatned Wrath averted. I must give you Warning this Day; for God knows, if ever we all meet again; some of you may meet with a Stroke of God's Wrath, e're we meet here again. Therefore, hearken to the Warning I am to give you, in these following Instances of the Sins of the Land, which are obvious Reasons from our selves, why we have Cause to fear that there's a Storm coming upon us.

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And, *First, Doth not Atheism and Irreligion very much abound among us?* There have been such Monsters of Men among us, as have deny'd the Being of a God, and disputed against the most fundamental Articles of Religion. But, my Beloved, tho' few will speak out this Atheism and Unbelief; are there not Multitudes of practical Atheists, Men void of the Fear of God, Men who contemn God, who trample upon his holy Laws; and so run Head-long upon the thick Bosses of his Buckler? Are there not Swarms of godless, graceless Souls, who make a Mock of Sin, who count Religion a vain Thing, and ridicule these, who concern themselves about it? Are there not among us, who proudly say, at least, by their Practice, Who is the Lord that we should obey him? And do ye think, That God will always sit with such Affronts? No, he will, in due Time, *whet his glittering Sword, his Hand will take hold on Judgment, he will render Vengeance to his Enemies, and reward them that hate him. He will make his Arrows drunk with the Blood of the Slain; — Deut. xxxii. 41, 42.*

But 2. *Are not God's pure Worship, and Ordinances profaned and abused?* Ah! This is a sad Sign of the Lord's Anger. God is very tender of his Church. His Church is his Spouse, and God's Worship and Ordinances are the Means of begetting Children unto him. And sure, if his Church continue to play the Harlot with many Lovers, he will at length give up with her, tho' he may bear long, and deal with her, both by Word and Rod, to return unto him. Alas! Have we not Cause to observe and lament, this Day, the sad Abuse of Things that are pure, the gross Mixture of Men's Invention in the Worship of God, which is so much countenanced by many, contrary to our solemn National Covenant, wherein all that superstitious Trash was renounced. Hear, what God says of his Church, *Song. iv. 12. A Garden Inclosed is my Sister, my Spouse; a Spring shut up, a Fountain sealed.* Now, God will not have the Garden of his Church planted with Bastard-Ordinances; he will not have his pure Ordinances polluted by the Intermixture of Men's Inventions: He will not have the pure Fountains and Springs defiled with the nasty Rubbish of Man's vain Conceits, who would be wise above what is written. And when a Church begins to *bound* with these Things, 'tis a sad Token, that the Lord may depart from them,

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them, and send them a Famine, *Not of Bread, or of Water; but of the Word of the Lord; Amos viii. 11.* My Friends, God's Ordinances have been corrupted in Scotland, and there are not a Few, who, to this Day, are fond of these Corruptions. Take heed, that the Lord give not up with us, on this Account.

3. *Are we not guilty of woful Lukewarmness and Indifferency, a lamentable Carelessness, and Neutrality in Religion?* Hear, what the Lord saith of the Church of the *Laodiceans, Rev. iii. 15. I know thy Works, that thou art neither cold nor hot.* There's their Sin. Their Punishment follows, *Ver. 16. So then, because thou art Lukewarm, and neither Cold nor Hot, I will spue thee out of my Mouth.* Nothing is more loathsome to God, than a Lukewarm Church: And have we not Cause to fear upon this Account? Are there not many among us, who have a Name to live, and yet are dead? And are there not many, who make no small Noise of their Religion, and who have a flourishing Profession, who are Naught in point of Practice. They are neither to be ranked among the openly Profane, because their Life is outwardly blameless; and their Profession of Religion no less, if not more open, perhaps, than that of many sincere Christians, who make not so much Noise: Nor are they to be ranked among the truly Godly, because they are but Naught at the Heart. What then? They are just such as are here described, Lukewarm Folk, neither Cold nor Hot, Hypocrites and Formalists. Ah! my Friends, this is a sad Token of a Storm, when there is not a Reality in Religion, answerable to our Profession.

4. *Are we not guilty of woful Apostacy and Backsliding in Scotland?* Where is our former Strictness and Zeal? *Matth. xxiv. 12. Because Iniquity shall abound, the Love of many shall wax cold.* This is reckoned among other Presages of Judgments. 'Tis ordinarily to be observed, there is a Falling away, before God bring desolating Judgments on a Church. *2 Thess. ii. 3. Let no Man deceive you by any Means; for that Day shall not come, except there come a Falling away first.* My Beloved, there hath been much Falling away, lamentable Apostacy and Backsliding among many, both Ministers and People in Scotland, and that both in Principle and Practice: And shall not God Visit for these Things? There have been many, who appear'd like Stars of the first Magnitude, by a flourish-

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ing Profession, and forward Zeal; who have proven nothing but blazing Meteors, and have made Shipwrack of the Faith, and of a good Conscience. Alas! for the Backslidings of *Scotland*! Alas! for the *Hankering*, many of us have had after the corrupt Ways of other Nations. *Jer. iii. 7, 8, &c.* You see *Israel* backslides, and her treacherous Sister *Judah* saw it. Well, Did *Judah* see it, and take Warning, and amend? No; but *her treacherous Sister Judah feared not, but went and played the Harlot also.* Alas! my Beloved, this hath been our Case: We have too much follow'd the pernicious Ways of other Backsliding Nations and Churches. A fore Matter, that God should have it to say of his People, *That they are bent to Backsliding; Hoseah xi. 7.* God knows, how many in *Scotland* have been bent to it. *Scotland* hath broken solemn National Engagements, and have grievously revolted from the Lord: A sad Token of God's Wrath. Alas! Backsliding is become a common Evil in our Day, and 'tis little thought of; but if we mend not Matters, we may come to feel the Dint of God's outstretched Hand, in more terrible Judgments, than any we have yet met with. See what the Lord says, *Prov. xiv. 14. The Backslider in Heart shall be filled with his own Ways.* And there cannot be a worse Plague than this. When God gives up with a Person or People, and ceases to be a Reprover unto them, and lets them take their Fill of their Sins; it's the worst Plague out of Hell, and a sad Forerunner of some dreadful Judgment. That's an awful and terrible Word, *Heb. x. 38. If any Man draw back, my Soul shall have no Pleasure in him.* Ah! Sirs, I cannot reckon up all the Instances of woful Backsliding in *Scotland*: Some have backslidden from their former pretended Zeal for God, and the Concerns of his Glory, unto a lamentable Neutrality and Indifferency: Some have backslidden from an outwardly blameless Deportment, to open and avowed Profanity: Some, like *Demas*, have forsaken the Way of the Lord, and grasped at this present World: There are Some, who, tho' they may look like Saints, are no better than Devils: There are Some, who have so far apostatized, that if ye had told them some 40 or 50 Years ago, that they would run the Course they are running, they would have been ready to say with *Hazael, What! Am I a Dog, to do such Things?* *2 Kings viii. 13.* Oh! Sirs, we know not the Deceitfulness, and desperate.

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desperate Wickedness that lurks in our Hearts, and that may break out in the most heinous Transgressions in the Life, when the Temptation comes. And has not this been seen of many in Scotland within these 40 Years? There's a sort of Folk, *John vi. 15.* that would have made Christ a King, and when he was speaking of himself as the Bread of Life, they say, *Lord, evermore give us this Bread; Ver. 34.* Now, you would think thir People had a great Respect for Christ, and that they would have adhered close to him, after such Language as this; but what came of it? It's said of these same People, *Ver. 66. From that Time, many of his Disciples went back, and walked no more with him.* And what says Christ himself to the Twelve? *Ver. 70. Have not I chosen you Twelve, and one of you is a Devil?* Who would have thought, that Judas, who went out and in with Christ, among his Disciples, was a Devil? Perhaps he was as little suspected as any of them; but Christ well knew the Naughtiness of his Heart; *For he needed not that any should testify of Man; for he knew what was in Man; John ii. 25.* O! Sirs, there have been not a few such Devils among us, whose Apostacy has discovered their vile and abominable Villany and Hypocrisy, who have some of them made a black Hinder-End: And we are afraid there may be such among us to this Day. Alas! Christ hath got many Wounds in Scotland, in the House of his Friends, by pretended Friends, but Heart-Enemies. We are sadly backslidden; O plead with God this Day, that we may not backslide with a perpetual Backsliding. God forbid that we hold fast Deceit, and refuse to return; *Jer. viii. 5.* If so, we may be justly afraid of the Threatning which is denounced against them, *Ver. 12. I will surely consume them, saith the Lord.* I know not a more threatening Token of Wrath coming, than our grievous Backslidings and Apostacy. O! that Scotland would think in good Earnest of turning unto the Lord, from all her Backslidings.

But 5. Another grievous Sin that is lying upon us, unrepented of to this Day, is the dreadful and crying Sin of Blood-shed. A Sin from which we are not purged to this Day. This is one of the most crying, and God-provoking Sins. What says the Lord, *Ezek. ix. 9. The Iniquity of the House of Israel and Judah is exceeding great, and the Land is full of Blood, and the City full of Perverseness.* — And what

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what comes of it? Ver. 15. *And as for me, also (saith the Lord) mine Eye shall not spare, neither will I have Pity; but I will recompence their Way upon their Head.* Ezek. xx. 6, 7, 8, 9, &c. Thus saith the Lord God, *Wo to the bloody City*——— *For her Blood is in the Midst of her; she set it upon the Top of a Rock; she poured it not upon the Ground, to cover it with Dust.* q. d. She hath shewed her Cruelty unto all the World, and was not ashamed thereof, neither hid it: Contrary to what the Lord had commanded, That the very Blood of Beasts should be covered over with Dust; Lev. xvii. 13. Deut. xii. 16, 24. and xv. 23. Well, what saith the Lord concerning this bloody City? Ver. 8.——— *I have set her Blood upon the Top of a Rock, that it should not be covered.* q. d. As she hath sinned openly, I will punish her openly; and the Signs and Monuments thereof shall remain to the Generations to come. And the Prophet goes on to further Threatnings in the following Verses, which ye may read at your Leisure. Now, my Friends, I must tell you, this Day, think of it what you will, That the innocent Blood shed in *Scotland*, is a crying Sin, a Sin that crieth for Vengeance. Many honest Ministers and Christians have been persecuted unto Death these Years bygone in *Scotland*, for the Cause of God; and think ye that God hath forgotten this? Nay, mistake it not, their Blood hath a Voice. Alas! my Friends, many Folk in *Scotland* thought they did God good Service, when they persecuted the Saints, or aided and abetted their Persecutors; and never considered that they were, mean time, heaping up the Pile of the Fire of God's Wrath for themselves, and hastening on their own utter Destruction. Ah! Sirs, the bloody Laws that have been made in *Scotland*: We have seen Iniquity establish'd by a Law; we have seen wicked Laws made, and as rigorously and wickedly put in Execution. God will reckon with Persecutors; they may get Leave to go on for a Time, God may use them as a Rod for his People's Correction; but he will at length cast the Rod into the Fire. O! Sirs, what Cruelties of all sorts have been used in these Lands? What Fineing and Confineing? What Intercommuning? What horrid Murders of the People of God, in cold Blood, by Soldiers, who were allow'd to put ensnaring Questions unto them, and to shoot them dead on the Spot, if they answered not according to their Mind? This was cruel Persecution and Murder, without so much

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as the Shadow and Form of Law. But then, how many have been persecuted unto Death, for either real, or sometimes only alledged Transgressions of wicked and ensnaring Laws? Alas! Sirs, for the Blood-guiltiness that lies upon these Lands, which is not purged away to this Day: For, are there not many who have had a Hand in these Things, who have never come to a Sense of their horrid Wickedness? And are there not many others, who involve themselves in the same Guilt, by their approving and defending thereof; and shall not God be avenged on such a Nation as this? Till we make a clean Breast, and confess this and other crying Sins, I'm persuaded God will not let us out of his Grips, but will pursue us with one Stroke after another, until we be either amended, or utterly destroyed. I shall only add on this Head, That the Land is full of Blood, not only on Account of the Blood of the Saints, but other horrid Murders, which frequently break out, and sometimes are not condignly punished. This may provoke the Lord, to take the Sword in his own Hand.

But 6. There is another Sin that is a Token of God's Wrath, from our selves, and that is, COVENANT-BREAKING, a Sin, that some Folk thought a Virtue. They thought it a Virtue in Scotland, Sirs, to burn the Covenant. But, I'll tell you, think of it what you will, I'm afraid of a Storm of God's Wrath coming upon that Head. It was the Glory of this Land, that our Kings, Princes, Nobles, Ministers, and Persons of all Ranks, entred into a solemn Covenant against Popery, Prelacy, and Superstition; and for the Purity of Doctrine, Discipline, Worship, and Government of this Church; and for further Reformation of Manners: And it was our Sin and Shame, that we did so wickedly depart from, and break this Covenant, a Sin, which I fear, God will avenge in his own Time. There is a Set of Folk among us, that make a Mock of the Covenant; but God will not be mocked. There's some Folk make light of it, and will be ready to say, What have we to do with that Covenant? We had no Hand in it, and are not bound by it. I'll give you two Words upon this, *First*, The Matter of this Covenant being lawful, and the Representatives of the Land, and Persons of all Ranks having entred into it; it's binding upon us, and will be binding on our Posterity. I'll give you Scripture to prove this

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*Deut. xxix. Moses and the People entered into Covenant : But, who are they that enter into Covenant with God? See it, Verse 10. Ye stand this Day all of you before God. Your Captains of your Tribes, your Elders, and your Officers, with all the Men of Israel, your little ones, your Wives, and thy Stranger that is in thy Camp, from the Hewer of thy Wood, unto the Drawer of thy Water. Well, what are all thir People to do? Read it, Verse 12, 13. That thou shouldest enter into Covenant with the Lord thy God, and into his Oath which the Lord thy God maketh with thee this Day, that he may establish thee to Day for a People unto himself, and that he may be unto thee a God, as he hath said unto thee, and as he hath sworn unto thy Fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob. Well, you'll say, These People who made this Covenant, were obliged to it, and bound by it. But what is that to others that had no Hand in it? But you deceive your selves by such a vain Conceit. Mark, What follows, Verses 14, 15. Neither with you only do I make this Covenant, and this Oath; but with him that standeth here with us this Day, before the Lord our God; and also, with him that is not here with us this Day. But I'll give you a second Word to clear this Point. God punisheth Posterity for the breach of the Covenant made by their Forefathers; And would he do so, if they were not bound by the same Covenant? I will give you two Instances of this. The First is in this same xxix. of *Deut.* read Verse 22. to the End of that Chapter, at your Leisure; and you'll find, That, when the Generations to come of their Children, should rise up after them, and the Stranger that should come from a far Land, should say, when they see the Plagues of that Land, and the Sickness which the Lord laid upon it, &c. *Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this Land? What meaneth the Heat of this great Anger?* What is the Answer? Read it Ver. 25. *Then, Men shall say, Because they have forsaken the Covenant of the Lord God of their Fathers, which he made with them, when he brought them forth out of the Land of Egypt, &c. --- A Covenant of an old Date, made with their Fathers, and broken by their Children who have served other Gods and worshipped them. --- And what came of it? The Anger of the Lord was kindled against this Land, to bring upon it all the Curses that are written in this Book. ---- Well, but perhaps some will not yet**

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yet believe, that these things belonged to their Posterity. But you must believe this, if you believe God's own Word. See, and consider what the Lord says, Verse 29. — *These things which are revealed belong unto us, and to our Children for ever, that we may do all the Words of this Law.* Is there any thing can be more express than this? But take another Instance, *Joshua ix. 15, &c.* There we find, That *Joshua made Peace, and a League with the Gibeonites.* And Verse 18. *That the Princes of the Congregation sware unto them by the Lord God of Israel.* They were beguiled into this Covenant, yet the Name of God being interposed, they reckon themselves bound by this solemn Transaction. For they say, Verse 19. *We have sworn to them by the Lord God of Israel, now therefore we may not touch them.* Well, what of all this? Compare 2 Sam. xxi. 1. &c. *There comes a Famine upon the Land in the Days of David (a long time after that Transaction with the Gibeonites,) and it continued three Years, Year after Year.* David enquired of the Lord, and the Lord answered, *It is for Saul and his bloody House, because he slew the Gibeonites: And the Anger of God was not appeased, till seven of Saul's Sons were delivered unto them, and hanged in the Hill before the Lord, Ver. 8, 9.* You see then, that a Covenant made with our Forefathers may be binding on our Posterity. I shall only add, my Friends, What Reason is it to think, Posterity are bound by civil Covenants and Transactions, if they be not rather bound by such solemn Obligations, to their Duty, and against Sin. God is jealous of the Honour of his Name; and nothing is more provoking unto him than Covenant-breaking. I'll give you some Scripture Words to this Purpose, *Deut. xxviii. 58, 59.* What says God there to his covenanted People of Israel, *If thou wilt not observe to do all the Words of this Law, that are written in this Book, that thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful Name, THE LORD THY GOD (i. e. thy covenanted God) Then the Lord will make thy Plagues wonderful; And N. B. The Plagues of thy Seed, even great Plagues, and of long continuance, and sore Sickneses, and of long continuance.* Read at your Leisure to the End of that Chapter, and you will find, what terrible Threatnings are denounced for Covenant-breaking. Read and consider what we have, *Jer. xxii. 7, 8, 9.* There the Lord threatens, *I will prepare Destroyers against thee, every one with his Weapons, and they shall cut down thy choice Cedars, and cast them into the Fire. And many Nations shall pass by this City, and they shall say every Man to his*

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his Neighbour, *Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this great City?* Then they shall Answer, *BECAUSE, they have forsaken the Covenant of the Lord their God, and worshipped other Gods, and served them.* You see, God will not let Covenant-breaking pass unpunished. Read *Jer. xxxiv. 8. &c.* There the People had made a Covenant with the Lord, that at seven Years End they would let their Servants go free, Well, they brake this Covenant. And what saith the Lord, *Ver. 17. Therefore, thus saith the Lord, ye have not hearkned unto me, in proclaiming Liberty, every one to his Brother, and every Man to his Neighbour: Behold, I proclaim a Liberty for you, saith the Lord, to the Sword, to the Pestilence, and to the Famine, and I will make you to be removed into all the Kingdoms of the Earth.* O! Sirs, let People think of it what they will, I am afraid of God's Judgments on these sinful Lands for Covenant-breaking. See what God threatens against his People, *Ezek. xvi. 59.* For thus saith the Lord God, *I will even deal with thee as thou hast done, which hast despised the Oath in breaking the Covenant.* My Friends, God will pursue the Quarrel of a broken Covenant upon the greatest, Kings themselves shall not escape Punishment for this Sin. I'll give you God's Word for what I say; read and consider, *Ezek. xvii. 11.* and downward. In the 12. Verse, you see the King of Babylon comes to Jerusalem, takes the Kings thereof, and the Princes thereof, and leads them unto Babylon. Verse 13. *He takes the King's Seed, and makes a Covenant with him, and takes an Oath of him; he takes also the Mighty of the Land.* Well, this Covenant is broke, Verse 15. *He rebelled against him, in sending his Ambassadors into Egypt, that they might give him Horses, and much People.* Now, what came of it? What! says the Lord, *Shall he prosper? Shall he escape that doth such Things? Or shall he break the Covenant and be delivered?* Ver. 16. *As I live, saith the Lord God, surely in the Place where the King dwelleth that made him King, whose Oath he despised, and whose Covenant he broke, even with him, in the midst of Babylon he shall die.* And Ver. 17. he tells us, *Pharaoh with his mighty Army, shall not be able to help him.* What is the Matter? See Ver. 18, 19. *&c. Seeing he despised the Oath, by breaking the Covenant, (when lo, he had given his Hand) and hath done all these things, he shall not escape,* Well, but perhaps you will say, What can be the Ground of such a severe Threatning; for this was but a Covenant with a Heathen King, who had led them Captive? But hear what the Lord saith, He

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He owns it as his *Covenant*, Ver. 19. *Thus saith the Lord God, as I live, surely, MINE OATH that he hath despised, and MY COVENANT that he hath broken, even it will I recompense upon his own Head, &c.* And Ver. 21. *It's said, Ye shall know that I the Lord have spoken it.* My dear Friends, think not lightly of Covenant-breaking, as alas many do in our Day. Hear what the Lord threatens for Covenant-breaking, Lev. xxvi. 25, 26. *I will bring a Sword upon you, that shall avenge the Quarrel of my Covenant; and when ye are gathered together within your Cities, I will send the Pestilence among you, and when I have broken the Staff of your Bread, ten Women shall bake your Bread in one Oven, and they shall deliver you your Bread again by weight.* Here are Threatnings of all these three remarkable and terrible Judgments, of *Sword, Pestilence, and Famine*, upon the account of Covenant-breaking; and yet there are still more dreadful Judgments threatned, in case they should continue to walk contrary unto the Lord. He hath threatned to walk contrary to them in *Fury*, and to *Chastise them seven times for their Sins*. And the Judgments that follow, are most dreadful indeed. That they shall eat the *Flesh of their Sons*, and the *Flesh of their Daughters*; that he will destroy their high Places, and cut down their Images, and cast their Carcasses upon the Carcasses of their Idols; that his Soul will abhorre them; that he will make their Cities waste, and bring their Sanctuaries into Desolation, and will not smell the Savour of their sweet Odours; that he will bring the Land into Desolation; that even their Enemies which dwell therein, should be astonished at it; that they should be scattered among the Heathen; that he would draw out a Sword after them; that their Land should be desolate, and their Cities waste; and that it should rest, when it lies desolate, because it did not rest in their Sabbaths when they dwelt upon it, &c. Oh! Sirs, do not think that you have nothing to do with such Threatnings. What was all this for? Was it not to avenge the Quarrel of a broken Covenant? My Friends, There was never Nation, since the Days of ancient *Israel*, more solemnly and explicitly engaged unto the Lord, by way of Covenant, than we have been. And was there ever any Nation that have been more Perfidious, than we have been? Was there ever People, that have done more wickedly against the Covenant, than we have done? Dan. xi. 32. What! Can we pretend to plead Exemption from such Judgments, as others have suffered on that account? Alas! there are many among us

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have seared Consciences ; but let Men speak and think of it what they will, I am afraid, many in *Scotland* shall find the Vengeance threatned against Covenant-breaking, many have found it, and others shall find it to their Cost ; and it will not be a light Wrath when it comes. Woe's me for it, that we should have it to say of the People of *Scotland*, that many of them keep no Covenant at all, but their Covenant with Hell and Death. For, Alas ! besides the Breach of solemn National-Covenants, (whereof I have been speaking at some length) have we not Cause to take up a Lamentation this Day, that personal Engagements at Baptism, at the Lord's-Supper, or upon other Occasions, are so little minded by the generality of People ; and on this, as well as other Accounts, we may reckon our selves A COVENANT-BREAKING GENERATION. But my dearly Beloved, I cannot part thus with this Subject ; I'll give you one Word of Comfort from the Word of the Lord. See what the Lord says to his Covenant-breaking People, after all the dreadful Threatnings he had denounced for that Sin, *Lev. xxvi. 40. &c. If they shall confess their Iniquity, and the Iniquity of their Fathers, with their Trespass, which they trespassed against me, and that also they have walked contrary unto me, and that I also have walked contrary unto them, and have brought them into the Land of their Enemies ; if then their uncircumcised Hearts be humbled, and they then accept of the Punishment of their Iniquity ; then will I remember my Covenant with Jacob, and also my Covenant with Isaac, and also my Covenant with Abraham will I remember, and I will remember the Land.* Here are the most kindly and gracious Intimations that can be, of God's Concern for a covenanted People. He's loath to give up with them. How earnestly does the Lord call to backsliding *Israel*, *Jer. iii. 14. Turn O backsliding Children, for I am married to you.* — And again *Ver. 22. Return ye backsliding Children, and I will heal your Backslidings.* — *Hos. xi. 7. The Lord complains there of his People, That they are bent to Backsliding ; and tho' they deserved, on this account, to be utterly cast of and forsaken ; yet how loath is he to go to Extremities with them ; Ver. 8. How shall I give thee up Ephraim ? How shall I deliver thee Israel ? How shall I make thee as Admah ? How shall I set thee as Zeboim ? Mine Heart is turned within me, and my Repentings are kindled together. My dear Friends, I think God is just dealing so with Covenant-breaking Scotland. He is shaking the* Rod.

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Rod over our Heads, and sometimes laying on some lesser Judgments, and yet continuing the sweet Calls of the Gospel, inviting us to Repent and return, with the most endearing Motives: He seems loath to give up with us, and has waited long for our Repentance and Reformation, and perhaps he may wait yet sometimes longer; but mistake it not, think not, that it will always be so. If we still go on in our Trespases, threatned Wrath will, at length, be executed. Therefore, my earnest Request to you, this Day, is, to humble yourselves before the Lord, to confess your Sins; to plead with God for Mercy to your selves, and to the Land, that our Iniquities may not be our Ruin. Sin unrepented of will bring on Wrath sooner or latter. You see, in that vii. of *Josh.* 13. There was no taking up the Controversy, till the accursed Thing was searched out, and taken away. The Storm, that was raised for *Jonah's* Sin, ceased not, till *Jonah* was cast into the Sea. *Jonah* i.

Now, my Friends, God is shaking the Rod over our Heads: He hath been shaking the Sword in *France*, and our Friends there have found the Dint of it. And who knows, when it may come to our Doors? We have found him shaking the Rod of Famine over our Heads. What! shall we defy God? No, *God will not be mocked, what a Man sows, that shall he reap.* *Gal.* vi. 7. Well, what shall we do, say ye? I intreat and advise you, I beseech and obtest you, to mourn for your Sins, and to run unto the Fountain of Mercy; never think, that the Streams of it shall run dry: No, for as long as it hath been running these Five Thousand Years and more, it is as full as ever. I warn you then, to flee from Wrath, and to flee to the Fountain of Mercy; and is it not a Mercy, think ye, that we get Warning. There's Need, we sound the Trumpet, and declare what is coming from the Lord. But, I'll tell you, Sirs, God's Threatnings always include a Condition in their Bosom; The Language of them is that, which ye have, *Ezek.* xviii. 30, 31, 32. — Repem, and turn your selves from all your Transgressions; so Iniquity shall not be your Ruin: Cast away from you all your Transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make ye a new Heart, and a new Spirit; For why will ye dy, O House of Israel. For I have no Pleasure in the Death of him that dieth, saith the Lord God; wherefore, turn your selves, and live ye, q. d. If ye would but give up with your Sins, and turn unto me, from whom ye have so deeply revolted; I would give up with the Quarrel, and turn from the Fierceness of mine Anger. But, alas! many will

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will never think on God's Hand that is lifted up, until it fall heavily upon them.

Now, my dearly Beloved, I have told you of *our Sins, our Danger, and our present Duty*. And have endeavoured all along, to intermix practical Reflections: And therefore, having continued so long already, I shall not detain you with any long *Application*, of what hath been insisted upon; but shall presently conclude with these few following Words of

APPLICATION.

Use. I. May be for LAMENTATION.

My dearly Beloved, have we not much Reason, this Day, to lament and mourn before the Lord for our own Sins, and the Sins of the Land? Have we not Reason to say, *We with our Fathers have sinned, and done Iniquity?* and that *our Iniquities do testify against us*: Alas! this is a hardened Generation. How many go on in their Trespases; and yet, 'tis not easy to fasten a Conviction upon them: This should be for a Lamentation; and this will be for a Lamentation unto all that have the Glory of God, their own Salvation, and the true Interest of the Land at Heart. My Friends, I have been forewarning you of Judgments: Now would ye know, who they are that may expect a special Mark of Preservation, in a common Calamity; Even *these that Sigh and Cry for all the Abominations that be done in the Midst of the Land*; Ezek. ix. 4.

Ah! There are few Mourners among us.

A II. Use may be for TRIAL and EXAMINATION.

I have already told you, That the accursed Thing must be searched out. Now, let me intreat you to put Matters to the Trial. There are some Folk, say what we will, they will not believe, That they are so Ill, as really they are; they cannot be put off from having a good Conceit of themselves; say they, We are none of the worst of Sinners; There are much greater Sinners, than we; we keep a good Heart to God, and we do not wrong our Neighbours; and many one have lived a worse Life, and yet have died well; and, we hope, all will be well enough; God is merciful; we are all Sinners; and God forbid, that these Judgments you have been speaking of, should come upon us, we hope better Things. Ah! Sirs, by such carnal Reasonings, many poor Souls delude themselves, till they be undeceived, about this their Sin and Folly, in Hell. What is the Reason

Reason of this? It is even, because Men either think not about their Sins at all; (And alas! this is the Case of a great many) or they think but very carelessly and superficially; They do not search into the Bottom; they do not accomplish a diligent Search: They will take Time to look to the Accompt-Book, and to consider the State of their temporal Affairs; but 'tis a Burden to them, to think of examining the Case of their Souls. Well, Sirs, the Day is coming, when we will all be examined; and when we will not get it shifted: But, if you be wise unto Salvation, you will examine yourselves in Time, when Matters that are wrong, may be mended, and not put off, till you be past all Hope of Remedy. And if you would truly search out the accursed Thing; *To the Law and the Testimony with it.* There's some Folk, they judge of themselves, EITHER by their own corrupt Imaginations: They thought such a Thing right, or wrong, and they sought no further; as if our Thoughts were the Rule of knowing and discerning Sin and Duty; whereas, alas! Our Thoughts are themselves perverse and polluted, and ready to turn aside unto crooked Paths; Or, sometimes they judge themselves, by the Example and Practice of others; a very bad Rule. And many People are ready to imitate the Faults, more than the Virtues of good Folk. O then! bring your Heart and Way to the Word, as the only perfect Rule; set Conscience Awork, charge it to do its Office, as God's Deputy, faithfully: Beware, of covering your Sins, beware, of extenuating them, beware, of denying them. Hear what Conscience says to thee, O Drunkard, Swearer, Liar, Sabbath-breaker, unclean Person. Hear what Conscience says to thee, O proud, self-righteous Person, who builds upon thy Civility, Morality, or Profession of Religion. O! Sirs, Let this be a Day of close searching into the Sins of our Heart and Life, and the many Aggravations thereof; and a Day of spreading them before the Lord, in the most humble Acknowledgments; and a Day of sincere forsaking of them. And this leads unto

A III. and last Use of EXHORTATION, and EXPOSTULATION.

My dearly Beloved in the Lord, Let me intreat and beseech you, in the Bowels of Jesus Christ, to take Warning. I have told you, *That Sin brings on Judgments, Wickedness overthroweth the Sinner.* I have told you, *That the accursed Thing Sin, should be searched out, that it may be taken away.* And I have told you, *That Ministers should warn People, and People should take Warning.* I have exprest to you my

my Fears, that Wrath is coming on Scotland; and have given you several Grounds of these my Fears. And now let me intreat you, to hearken to the Word of EXHORTATION; Take Warning, rouse up yourselves from your carnal Security. The Prophet pronounceth a *Wo to them that are at Ease in Zion*; Am. vi. 1. Alas! I am afraid, this *Wo* belongs to many in our Day: O! awake ye that sleep; nay, ye that are dead in Trempasses and Sins. O! consider Matters in Time, before it be too late. Lay to Heart your own Sins, and the Sins of the Land; think upon them, till your Heart be affected with godly Sorrow, not to be sorrowed for; spread them out before the Lord, in humble and penitent Confessions; Cry mightily to God, for Pardon and Healing. Oh! Sirs, how few have we among us, this Day, that are Wrestlers at the Throne of Grace, that will stand in the Gap, and keep off the Storm; yet, we hope, there are some hidden Ones. My Friends, were it not so, we had been swallowed up of God's Judgments long ere now.

Now, I shall conclude all with that Word, which ye have, Amos. iv. 12. *Therefore, thus will I do unto thee, O Israel. And because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel.* Read the former Part of the Chapter, and you'll find a great many Judgments mentioned, which God had inflicted upon them for their Sins; such as, *Cleanness of Teeth*; ver. 6. *Withholding of Rain*; ver. 7. *Blasting and Mildew, and the Palmer-worm devouring their Gardens*; ver. 9. *The Pestilence after the Manner of Egypt*; *The slaying of their young Men with the Sword*; ver. 10. *And the overthrowing of some of them, like Sodom and Gomorrah*; ver. 11. These are dreadful Judgments. Yet, it is observed after each of these, that they were incorrigible; For 'tis still said, *Yet have ye not returned unto me, saith the Lord.* Which imports as much as this, *q. d.* If ye had returned unto me, when I sent you *Cleanness of Teeth*, I would not have withheld the Rain: If you had returned to me then, I would not have smitten you with *Blasting and Mildew*; and, if you had returned then, I would not have sent you the *Pestilence*; and so of the rest. But your Incorrigibleness under all these Rods, hath still drawn forth more and more Judgments upon you. And now after all, think not that God's Arrows are all spent. *Therefore, thus will I do.* He tells not what; but it imports, That there are still further Judgments in Reserve for impenitent, obstinate, and incorrigible Sinners: Well, but what shall they do; behold, Divine Goodness breathing forth in the Midst of these Threatnings; for God is loath to destroy his covenanted People; Therefore, they are called to prepare to meet their God. And now, my Friends, God hath been taking many Ways to reform and reclaim us; We now feel Something of that Judgment of *Cleanness of Teeth*; if we continue impenitent under this, we may look for the *Sword, Famine and Pestilence*; nay, for such Judgments, as shall make us a Desolation. O! then prepare to meet God. How do ye think to meet God? Are ye able to contend with the Almighty? Can ye stand before him, who is a consuming Fire to the Workers of Iniquity? No; what shall we do then, say ye? I'll tell you, what ye shall do; *Only acknowledge your Iniquities; — and return unto the Lord*; Jer. iii. 13, 14. *Flee to the Blood of Christ*; plead for Pardon, for his Sake. Go Home this Night, and think upon what you have heard; and seek Grace to improve it. We must count for this Day's Work. I shall add no more; but the Lord add his Blessing to what hath been said.